

## **BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT RECREATION FEE PROGRAM SUMMARY**

**NAME OF FEE PROJECT:** AZ01 PARIA CANYON/ COYOTE BUTTES  
**SPECIAL RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREA**

**STATE:** AZ

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### **DESCRIPTION:**

Paria Canyon, its tributaries Buckskin Gulch and Wire Pass, and the Coyote Buttes area are part of the larger Paria Canyon-Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness, designated in August 1984. The Special Management Area (SMA) consists of three smaller portions of the larger wilderness; they are distinct units both geographically and managerially: Paria Canyon, Coyote Buttes North, and Coyote Buttes South. The SMA consists of 8 trailheads, 2 campgrounds, and 27,741 acres of land, including 1,413 acres in the Arizona Strip Field Office. The Paria Canyon/Coyote Buttes Special Management Area is co-managed with the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, the Kanab Field Office, and the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument. Management goals include providing for the long-term protection and preservation of the area's wilderness character while managing the area for the use and enjoyment of visitors in a manner that will leave the area unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as a wilderness. Paria Canyon, Buckskin Gulch, and Wire Pass are widely recognized as one of the longest and most stunning slot canyon combinations in the world. Accessed from four trailheads, these narrow canyons wind their way sinuously downward through seven geologic layers, eventually ending at the Colorado River just below Glen Canyon Dam. The SMA area receives over 23,863 visitors per year.

In the Paria Canyon/Coyote Buttes Special Management Area, Individual Special Recreation Permits (SRPs) are issued for day hiking and overnight backpacking, and a limited number of permits are issued for each day. The issuing of permits/collecting fees is managed through the use of an automated, online permit authorization system which is funded separately from the permit fees. Expanded Amenity Fees are collected through a self-pay system for overnight camping at the White House Campground. Stateline Campground currently does not collect any amenity fees.

### **FEE SCHEDULE:**

Coyote Buttes North: \$7 per person per day  
Coyote Buttes South: \$5 per person per day  
Paria Canyon Overnight: \$5 per person per day  
Paria Canyon Day-Use: \$6 per person per day  
White House Campground: \$5 per person per day

### **SPECIFIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR FY09:**

#### **Visitor Services, Interpretation:**

An interpretive project was continued that includes regulatory, informational, directional, and interpretive panels for all trailheads, upgrades to the website, updates to the permit handouts, and

development of handouts for the Paria and Coyote Buttes Permit areas. A combination of permit fees and Federal appropriations paid for the projects. Recreation revenue funds pay for interpretive and permit printing, contract, patrols, volunteer support services, etc.

Major volunteer support, in combination with four months of labor provided by Paria Contact Station staff, provide excellent visitor service support at the Paria Contact Station and site visits to the Paria Canyon-Coyote Buttes permit area trailheads. The volunteers donated 3,200 hours of volunteer services.

**Repair, Maintenance, and Facility Enhancement:**

Recreational fees paid for four months of labor to repair and maintain current facilities, including cleaning restrooms, trailheads, and road networks by the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Recreation Aid.

Facility enhancement included the placement of porta potties outside of the Paria Contact Station for the heavy use days that exceed the restroom capacities of the Paria Contact Station. New rustic wooden signs were created for the backcountry trailheads associated with the Coyote Buttes South Permit Area and placed at three trailheads. A sign register was also placed at the main trailhead entrance for Coyote Buttes South onto the Paria Plateau.

Facility repairs included adding an additional volunteer RV site at the Paria Contact Station to aid in the support of visitor services.

**Wildlife Habitat Restoration, Resource Protection:**

Recreation fees provided funding for a Northern Arizona University partnership that manages a wilderness monitoring program. Site monitoring in Paria Canyon and Coyote Buttes is conducted annually by professors and graduate students in the Department of Geography, Planning, and Recreation. Monitoring is conducted to document visitor use impacts and the resultant data is part of the information used to assist managers in making informed land use decisions. In addition to the NAU project, trail and road counters have been placed at strategic locations to more accurately reflect the number of visitors entering and exiting the Paria Canyon/Coyote Buttes Special Management Area. Additionally, recreation fees helped support the a Paria Canyon Tamarisk 5-year removal project which began in 2008 and is a partnership between the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Grand Canyon Trust to aid in the restoration of the ecological integrity of the Paria River system within Paria Canyon. In 2009, the Grand Canyon Trust donated approximately 2,500 hours of volunteer time to continue the treatment and removal of tamarisk and Russian olive in over 7 miles of river corridor. The Arizona Strip, in conjunction with Cedar District fire crews, completed two burns in the Paria Canyon, one in the spring and one in the fall, to burn over 130 brush piles spread out over 5 miles of river corridor. The burn project was funded by Federal appropriations not recreation fee revenues.



### **Paria Canyon Fall RX 2009**

#### **Law Enforcement, Public Use, and Recreation:**

A Law Enforcement Officer (LEO) was placed with the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument. Three of the LEOs months of work are paid by fee program funds. In addition to the LEOs placement, and without using fee revenues, a Memorandum of Understanding was established with the Glen Canyon National Monument law enforcement staff to patrol common boundaries within the monuments and NPS unit. This, in combination with the aid of the Grand Staircase-Escalante and Arizona Strip LEOs, has resulted in increased patrols of the fee area and increased compliance of the commercial and private SRP users.

#### **SPECIFIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN FY10:**

##### **Visitor Services, Interpretation:**

Significant volunteer support, in combination with four months of labor provided by Paria Contact Station staff, provides excellent visitor service support at the Paria Contact Station and site visits or patrols within the at the Paria Canyon-Coyote Buttes permit area. The 10 volunteers donated 2,380 hours of volunteer services. Volunteers also assist the Paria Permits Recreation Technician (based out of

St. George, Utah) who is responsible for answering the majority of questions from the public, maintaining and monitoring the permit system, and printing and mailing permits around the world.

Recreation revenue receipts support the continuation of an interpretive project that includes installing and repairing regulatory, informational, directional, and interpretive panels for all trailheads.

In conjunction with the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument, the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument and the Kanab Field Office, Utah, visitor service enhancements will include:

1. Completion of trailhead maps depicting the 3 individual permit area boundaries contained in the Special Management Area.
2. Completion the Coyote Buttes North handout which is now distributed through the BLM, its partners and community interface locations (outdoor stores and lodging businesses).
3. Completion of Paria Canyon external website updates.

A combination of permit fees and federal appropriations paid for the projects.

#### **Repair, Maintenance, and Facility Enhancement:**

Recreation fee revenues were utilized to support 3.6 months of labor to repair and maintain current facilities, including cleaning restrooms, trailheads, and road networks by the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Recreation Aid (Utah).

In conjunction with the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument, the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument and the Kanab Field Office, Utah, facility enhancements included:

1. Emergency installation of a sump pump at the Paria Contact Station crawl space to prevent flooding at the Paria Contact Station from multiple flood events in 2010.
2. Expansion of the Stateline Campground – Addition of 4 campsites, an additional toilet, and rehabilitation work to the Arizona Trail overlook. Making the facility ADA compliant was also part of this project, which was completed November 2010 using AARA funds.

#### **Wildlife Habitat Restoration, Resource Protection:**

Recreation fee revenues provided funding for a Northern Arizona University (NAU) partnership that manages a wilderness monitoring program. Site monitoring in Paria Canyon and Coyote Buttes is conducted annually by professors and graduate students in the Department of Geography, Planning, and Recreation. Monitoring is conducted to document visitor-use impacts and the resultant data is part of the information used to assist managers in making informed land use decisions. A project separate from the NAU monitoring was for the installation of trail and road counters which have also been placed at strategic locations to more accurately reflect the number of visitors entering and exiting the Paria Canyon/Coyote Buttes Special Management Area.

Additionally, recreation fee revenues are utilized to support the Paria Canyon Tamarisk 5-year Removal Project which began in 2008. This partnership between the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Grand Canyon Trust was created to aid in the restoration of the ecological integrity of the Paria River system within Paria Canyon. In FY 2010, the Grand Canyon Trust donated approximately 674 hours of

volunteer time and 274 hours of staff time to continue the treatment and removal of Tamarisk and Russian olive in the river corridor.

**Law Enforcement – Public Use and Recreation:**

Three of the Law Enforcement Officer's (LEOs) months of work are paid for by fee program funds. In FY 2010, within the Paria Project area, LEOs have been focusing on commercial and private permit compliance, the protection of resources, issuing citations and enhancement of the safety of our visitors. This in combination with the aid of the Grand Staircase-Escalante and Arizona Strip LEOs has resulted in increased patrols of the fee area and increased compliance of the commercial and private SRP users.

**SPECIFIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN FY 2011**

**Visitor Services, Interpretation:**

In conjunction with the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument, the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument and the Kanab Field Office, Utah, interpretation enhancements included the completion of a leave no trace/safety video to be shown at the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Visitor Center during the walk-in permitting processing.

**Repair, Maintenance, and Facility Enhancement:**

1. The first segment of the Arizona National Scenic Trail at the Stateline Campground was hardened for universal accessibility.
4. Maintenance of the Buckskin Gulch Wash and House Rock Valley Road crossing was performed to allow year round access to the Wire Pass and Buckskin Gulch Trailheads.
5. In partnership with Grand Canyon Trust and an Americorps crew, a segment of the trail into the Maze Rock Art Site was rebuilt.

**Wildlife Habitat Restoration, Resource Protection:**

1. A public use survey was completed by NAU of the Coyote Buttes SRMA related to completion of the travel management environmental assessment.
2. Three trips were made for the Paria Canyon tamarisk removal project to complete the tamarisk and Russian olive removal portion of the project to its terminus at Wrather Arch.

**Fee Agreements and Reservation Services:**

1. Upgrades to the administrative functioning of the online permitting website were completed.
2. A new contract for maintenance of the online fee permit and lottery systems was established.

**Law Enforcement – Public Use and Recreation:**

Three law enforcement officer's (LEO's) time while in the SMA were paid by fee program funds in FY 2011. Their focus has been on commercial and private permit compliance, the protection of resources, issuing citations and enhancement of the safety of visitors. This, in combination with the aid of the Grand Staircase-Escalante and Arizona Strip LEOs, has resulted in increased patrols of the fee area and increased compliance of the commercial and private Special Recreation Permittees.

**PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR NEXT YEAR (FY2012)**

In continued collaboration with the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument, the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument and the Kanab Field Office, Utah, next year plans include:

**Repair, Maintenance, and Facility Enhancement:**

1. Analysis of the Buckskin Gulch Wash and House Rock Valley flood control issue to develop a plan that will allow year-round access to the Wire Pass and Buckskin Gulch Trailheads.
2. Completion and installation of an interpretive kiosk at pull-out for the Maze Rock Art Site.
3. Installation of small, unobtrusive directional signs to and from The Wave for visitor safety reasons.

**Wildlife Habitat Restoration, Resource Protection:**

Vermilion Cliffs National Monument and Grand Canyon Trust will once again sponsor an Americorps crew to complete small projects in the project area.

**Visitor Services:**

1. Replacement of a river gauge and addition of another river gauge in Buckskin Gulch to increase the accuracy flood warnings.
2. Installation of the leave no trace/safety video on the Paria Canyon/Vermilion Cliffs website.
3. Initiation of a volunteer docent program at Wire Pass Trailhead to provide visitors with general and safety information and provide initial safety assistance as visitors hike to and from The Wave.
4. The Paria Canyon/Coyote Buttes walk-in lottery will move permanently from the Paria Contact Station to the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Visitor Center in Kanab, Utah on November 16, 2011.
5. In addition, fee revenues will assist in (but not totally support) the hiring of four critical staff positions on Vermilion Cliffs National Monument to be filled during FY 2012: the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument Manager, an Outdoor Recreation Planner, a Law Enforcement Officer and a Recreation Technician. Two critical staff positions at the Kanab Field Office will be filled during FY 2012: the Assistant Field Manager and Outdoor Recreation Planner. The Kanab Field Office and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument staff will move together from separate office buildings into a new office building in Kanab, Utah.